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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses leadership styles and the stages of development of a group. Situational leadership is based on the amount of direction (task behavior) and the amount of socio-emotional support (relationship behavior) the leader must provide given the situation and level of maturity or readiness of the followers. Having gauged the maturity level, the leader decides which leadership style to use; telling, selling, participating, or delegating. Situational leadership can be linked to stages in group development. There are four stages of group development. Each stage has a personal relation function and a task function. The stages of personal relations are dependency, conflict, cohesion, and interdependence. The stages of task functions are orientation, organization, data-flow, and problem-solving. "Experiential Leadership Education" teaches people skills in leadership, such as leadership styles and group dynamics. An Experiential Leadership Profile consists of scores from several tests, data gained from experience, and a group dynamics questionnaire. The profile shows results from pre- and post-tests that illustrate changes in style and effectiveness in hypothetical situations, recording decisionmaking over time. The profile enables the leader to visualize aspects of his or her leadership that are normally difficult to see. In a study of this approach, students using Experiential Leadership Education compared favorably to comparison groups not using this method. (KS)

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EDUCATING THE LEADER IN THE USE OF LEADERSHIP STYLES TO ENABLE GREATER MOTIVATION OF FOLLOWERS

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About the author: Dr. Phipps has held teaching positions in the outdoor leadership and experiential education fields in the U.S., the U.K., and Australia. He has served as consultant on curriculum development and on programs such as wilderness experience for socially deviant youngsters. His publications focus on leadership and psychology in relation to the outdoors.

Abstract: This paper discusses leadership styles and theories as they relate to motivation, the most important factor the modern leader must address. Situational Leadership ™ and motivation through empowerment are explained, as are the stages of development of a group and its interdependencies with a leader.

Motivation is often the single most important factor that the modern leader must address when considering the use of her or his style. A leadership theory which is predicated on motivation through empowerment is Situational Leadership ™. This is also a life cycle theory which encourages development of followers through a specific life cycle. This allows the leader to progress from being autocratic in the orientation stage of the group to eventually be a delegator of decision making in the interdependent stage of group development. As many expedition groups have specific beginnings and endings, a life-cycle theory is most appropriate.

Situational Leadership ™ (Hersey and Blanchard, 1982)

Situational Leadership ™ is based on the amount of direction (task behavior) and the amount of socio-emotional support (relationship behavior) a leader must provide given the situation and the level of *maturity* or *readiness* of his or her followers. Group dynamics studies by Cartwright and Zandar (1960), the Ohio State University leadership studies (1957), and Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid (1964) dispelled the idea that task and relationship were either/or leadership styles, instead styles tend to very within leaders (Hersey and Blanchard, 1982). Hersey and Blanchard maintain that research of the past several decades has supported the contention that there is no best style of leadership, and that any of the four basic styles in Figure 1 may be effective or ineffective depending on the situation. The diagram illustrates the four styles; the curve represents the path along which leader behavior moves as the followers' maturity (readiness) changes. The styles vary in amounts of task/relationship behavior, Situational Leadership Theory is based on the interaction of this interplay and the *maturity level* that followers exhibit in attempting to accomplish a specific task.

Maturity level is the ability and willingness of people to take responsibility for directing their own behavior. Having gauged the maturity level, the leader then decides which leadership style to use; telling, selling, participating or delegating; the combination that is best needed to

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influence the group or individual. This management style is specific to the leadership and follower's goals and to obtain maximum motivation.

The bell-shaped curve (see Figure 1) in the style of the leader portion of the model means that as the maturity level of one's followers develops, the appropriate style of leadership moves accordingly in the model along the curvilinear function.

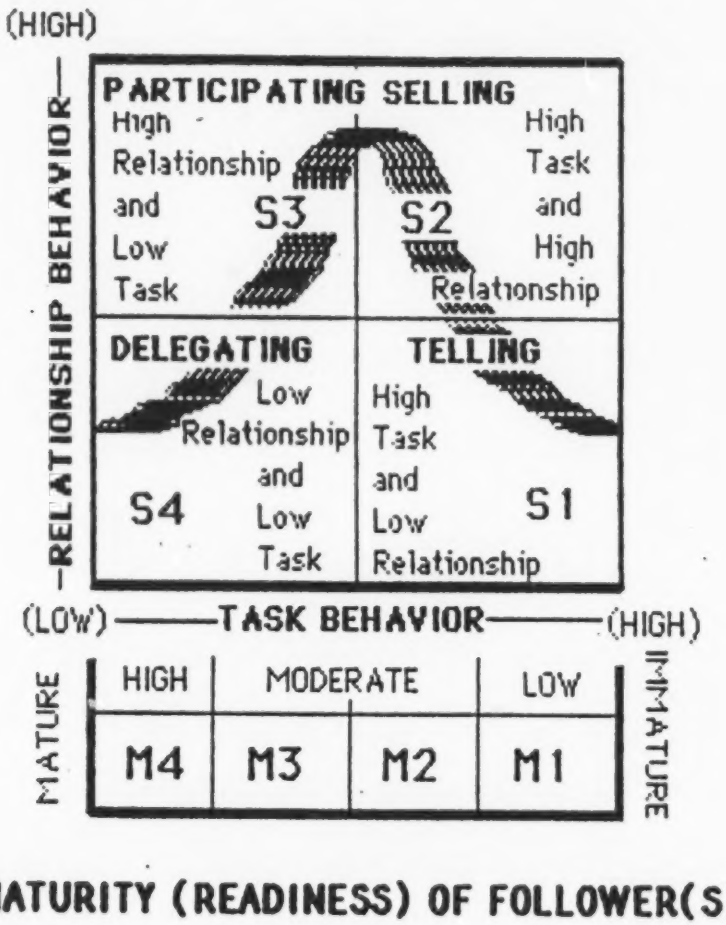

Figure 1. Situational Leadership ™.

Situational Leadership and Group Development

An important link regarding the Situational Leadership model and group dynamics is the information in group development by Jones (1973). The four stages of group development as suggested by Jones are shown in Figure 2.

Stage	Personal Relations	Task Functions
1	Dependency	Orientation
2	Conflict	Organization
3	Cohesion	Data-flow
4	Interdependence	Problem-solving

Figure 2. Jones' model of group development.

This model corresponds to the Hersey-Blanchard model and is an important concept to understand when dealing with groups in expedition settings. The natural development of the group can be enhanced by the use of the correct leadership style. The awareness of a conflict stage that the group can strive to work through will reduce apprehensions and tensions, making cohesiveness and interdependence more attainable.

As situations change rapidly in the fluid environment of the outdoors (task functions may change from orientation through problem-solving in a few hours) personal relations also change with this and so the corresponding leadership style must change also. This rapid change of situation creates an ideal learning opportunity or a difficult and demotivating experience if a single leadership style is used. Using the two models in conjunction may create an understanding allowing better judgement in selecting an appropriate style of leadership and in decision making in relation to the group. Figure 3 shows both of the models.

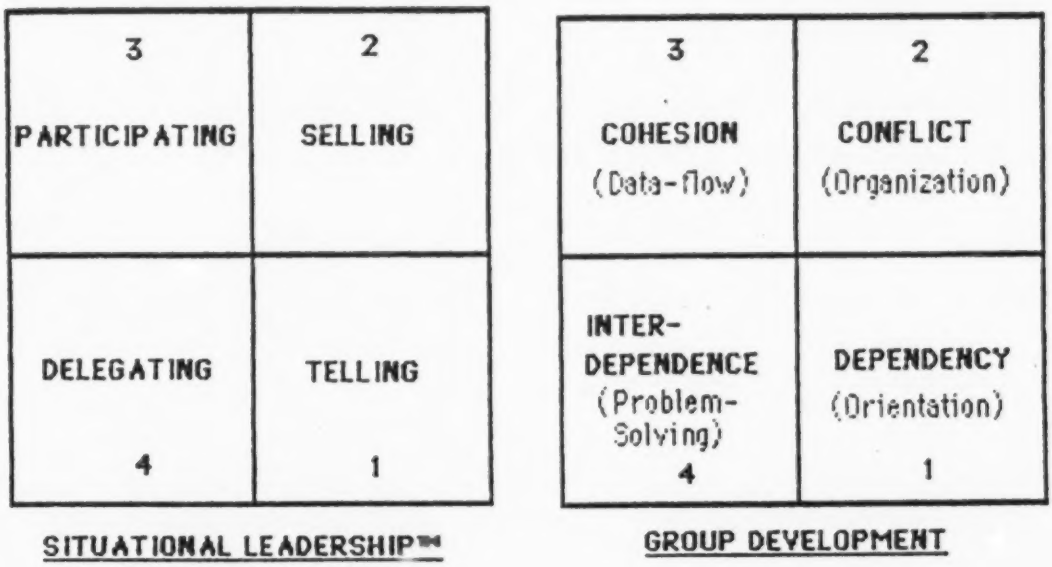

Figure 3. Both models.

The group development brings in the complexity of group dynamics. Whether the group dynamics are positive or negative, this affects the maturity or readiness of the group. Add to the complexity of group dynamics the intangible nature of leadership style theory and we have a potentially very confusing subject. How then should we teach these aspects of leadership (the *soft* of people skills)? Phipps (1986) suggested a systematic approach after conducting research on some Wilderness Education Association (WEA) courses. Some follow-up research has been accomplished since (Phipps, Yoshioka, and Jamieson, 1990), and the systematic approach has been used at Iowa State, Cal Poly, Western State College, and Washington State University. Since the publication of an article in the *Journal of Experiential Education* (Phipps, 1988) there have been numerous enquiries about the systematic approach from throughout the U.S., New Zealand, and the U.K.

The systematic approach requires illustration of one's own dominant and alternate styles, education of leadership and group dynamic theory, practice in leadership techniques, and constant feedback from followers. The systematic approach is called Experiential Leadership Education and is documented as follows.

EXPERIENTIAL LEADERSHIP EDUCATION

Experiential Leadership Education provides a method of teaching and measuring aspects of the *soft* skills of leadership in a systematic way. Soft skills in leadership are the *people* skills, such as leadership styles and group dynamics, as apposed to the *hard* skills, such as logistics planning, budgeting, marketing, etc. The soft skills because of their amorphous nature are often difficult to conceptualize. Using Experiential Leadership Education makes conceptualization easier (it is easier to conceptualize an experience than an abstraction).

The Experiential Leadership Profile

The conceptualization is achieved by using an *Experiential Leadership Profile* consisting of: (a) scores from a test instrument showing dominant/supporting styles; (b) scores from a test instrument showing changes in style, adaptability, and effectiveness; (c) data gained from experience, i.e., actual decision making (recorded in a journal using a theory of leadership), for example Hersey/Blanchard's Situational Leadership ™; (d) perceptions of group process from a group dynamics questionnaire.

Decision-making journals and charts.

The *Experiential Leadership Profile* shows results from pre- and post-tests which illustrate changes in styles and effectiveness in hypothetical situations, but more importantly, the recording of the decision making over time allows the use of charts to pinpoint incongruent use of leadership styles. Conferring with the trainee and her/his journal can enable analysis of the judgement that went into the decision making. An example of a leader style interaction chart is shown in Figure 1.

The styles can be combined to illustrate leader-centered/group-centered decision making or high/low-relationship styles. If the decisions recorded in the journals are recorded with the *whys* (rationale), *hows* (style), and whether it was a task or relationship decision, then the leader

analyst is able to more fully understand how the decisions were actually made. Charts can be made of all these trends to enable progress to be tracked. An example of a leader-centered/group-centered leader style chart is shown in Figure 2. There are expected trends that conform to the Situational Leadership theory; for example, in most groups the frequency of leader-centered styles should drop as time progresses. The chart trends can be compared to the expected trends, and where incongruencies occur, the journal can be checked to see if appropriate styles were being used.

This provides an effective teaching tool as the theory is put into action in a practical situation that allows detailed feedback. It can also be used in actual work situation besides the obvious use on leadership courses.

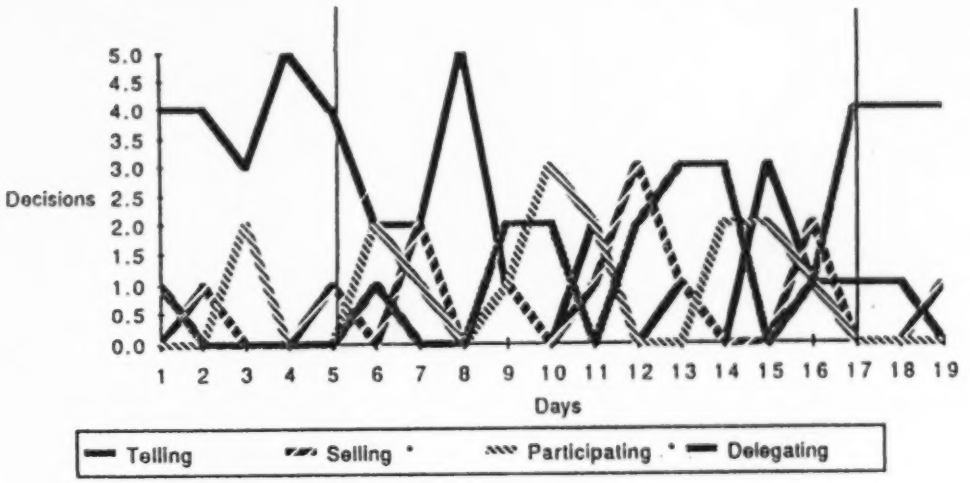

Figure 4. Leader style interactions. (* denotes dominant style on pre-test scores)

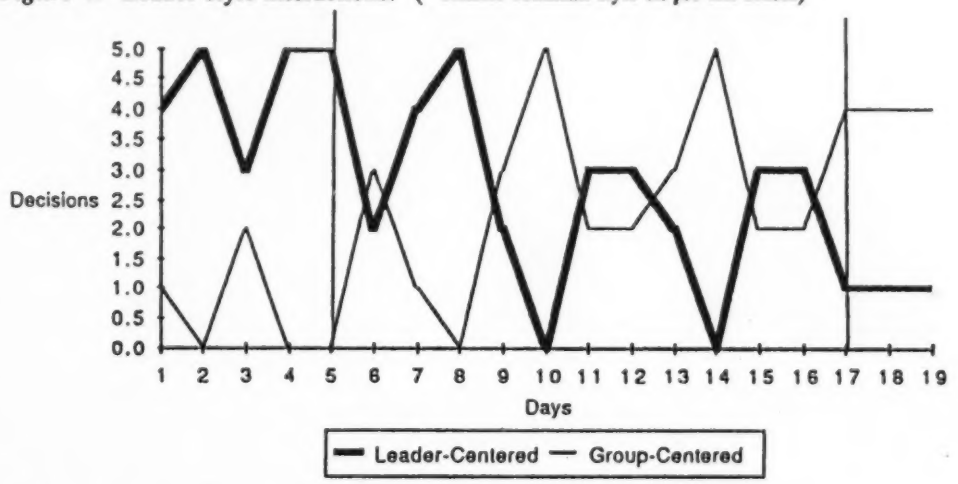

Figure 5. Leader-centered/group-centered style trends.

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Group Dynamics

As the internal dynamics of a group affects its performance, this is an important aspect of leadership education. A specific teaching model is used which can be modified for different groups. It enables problem solving in the group dynamics before unexpected crises.

The group member perceptions are measured quantitatively and qualitatively using a *Group Dynamics Questionnaire*. This questionnaire establishes the components of the group process that are being dealt with positively and negatively. The *Groups Dynamics Questionnaire* is a measure of the group climate. The qualitative statement in the instrument allow specific problems to be pinpointed; the quantitative measurements allow an assessment of what components the group needs to improve on , e.g., atmosphere, co-operation, task, or some other component.

Practical Applications of the Experiential Leadership Education

The combination of the leadership instrument scores (showing dominant style, effectiveness, etc.), with the actual decision making graphically represented and detailed in a journal, combined with the perceptions on the *Group Dynamics Questionnaire* allow a perception check for the leader. It enables the leader to visualize aspects of his/her leadership that are normally difficult to see. Often because of this amorphous nature of the soft skills, they are dealt with theoretically with very little follow up. Teaching Experiential Leadership using the *Experiential Leadership Profile* combines the experiential and theoretical constructs of leadership using a systematic approach and allows follow-up analysis during actual working conditions. The results can be visually tracked and can also be statistically analyzed.

Method Testing

The systematic approach of teaching was tested on two outdoor leadership expedition style courses in the Rockies using time series analysis [N (decisions)= 1640]. The leader effectiveness of the students compared favorably to comparison groups in the study not using this method [N (subjects) = 56]. The study is a doctoral thesis written by Maurice Phipps at the University of Minnesota. Pilot work was done over four years on Wilderness Education Association (WEA) leadership courses and on expedition courses from Mankato State University.

The Outdoor Environment

Although this method can be adapted to different environments, using an outdoor environment has several advantages. It enables a levelling of participants in regard to abilities. It provides diverse and quick changing situations with a need for many decisions requiring careful judgement. Adventure pursuits, if included, such as climbing or rappelling, help to bond the group members and can illustrate appropriate use of leader-centered decision making.

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